

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
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O R 210237Z APR 77 CORRECTED COPY FOR MCN
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3075
INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WELLINGTON 1458

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

SUVA FOR AMBASSAEOR SELDEN

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NZ
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S APRIL 19 SPEECH: ASSESSMENT
AND MOTIVATION

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 1442, (B) WELLINGTON 0981, (C) WELLINGTON
1043, (D) STATE 066980

SUMMARY: WHILE NEW ZEALAND MEDIA HAS FOCUSED ON
GRATUITUOUS NATURE OF SEVERAL OF PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S
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REMARKS ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER BEFORE NEW ZEALAND
INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, EMBASSY BELIEVES PRIMIN
GENUINELY MOTIVATED BY CONCERN THAT NEW ZEALAND INTERESTS
BEING OVERLOOKED BY CARTER ADMINISTRATION. LACK OF
SPECIFIC WASHINGTON VISIT DATE MAY BE SEEN BY MULDOON
AS SOME EVIDENCE OF THIS. MULDOON'S APPROACH, HOWEVER,
WAS TYPICALLY BLUNT PROBABLY OUT OF HIS CONVICTION

THAT A STRAIGHT-TALKING APPROACH IS DOMESTICALLY APPEALING. END SUMMARY.

1. WHILE PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S SPEECH OF APRIL 19 (WELLINGTON 1442) IS NOT FIRST TIME IN RECENT WEEKS HE HAS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENT AND DIRECTION OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN POLICY (SEE REFTELS B AND C), IT IS FAR MOST ELABORATIVE OF CONCERNS HE PREVIOUSLY SHARED. ACCORDING TO SOURCE IN P.M.'S OFFICE, SPEECH WAS DICTATED BY MULDOON AND IS THUS DIRECTLY AIMED AND UNQUESTIONABLY HIS OWN CONSIDERED PRODUCT. MOST SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS, THEREFORE, ARE WHAT IS PRIMIN'S TRUE CONCERN AND WHAT IS HIS MOTIVATION.

2. EARLY MEDIA ATTENTION FOCUSED ON HIS GRATUITOUS COMMENTS ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER, HIS BROTHER AND SISTER. SUBSEQUENT PRESS COMMENT HAS INCLUDED REPORT FROM WASHINGTON THAT AMERICAN SOURCES TERMED PRIMIN'S REMARKS AS "UNFORTUNATE", UNHELPFUL TO U.S.-NEW ZEALAND RELATIONS AND UNLIKELY TO HELP IN ARRANGING DATES FOR PRIMIN'S WASHINGTON VISIT LATER THIS YEAR. NO ONE HAS AS YET FOCUSED ON WHAT EMBASSY RELIEVES IS PRIMIN'S GENUINE CONCERN FOR DIRECTION OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY.

3. MFA AND PRIMIN'S DEPARTMENT SOURCES ADMIT TO HIGH DEGREE OF BEWILDERMENT ABOUT PRIMIN'S MOTIVATION IN MAKING SPEECH AT THIS TIME. IT SEEMS CONFIDENTIAL

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CLEAR HOWEVER THAT PRIMIN: (A) WAS SPEAKING IN TYPICALLY MULDOONIAN "TELL-IT-LIKE-IT-IS" STYLE; (B) WAS AWARE OF THE FAVORABLE DOMESTIC POLITICAL IMPACT THAT HIS EARLIER, STRAIGHT-FORWARD APPROACH TO PROBLEMS HAS HAD; (C) CONTINUES TO BE ANXIOUS ABOUT NEW ZEALAND'S INTERESTS BEING OVERLOOKED BY CARTER ADMINISTRATION; AND (D) IS BURDENED BY NOT VERY SOPHISTICATED NOTION OF U.S. POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND IMPLICATIONS OF "TRI-LATERAL" FOREIGN POLICY ON SMALL COUNTRIES SUCH AS NEW ZEALAND. LASTLY, PRIMIN'S STARK VIEW OF SOVIET THREAT IN SOUTH PACIFIC LIKELY CONTRIBUTES TO HIS UNEASE.

4. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, PRIMIN'S SHARP TONGUE HAS FREQUENTLY GOTTEN HIM INTO DIFFICULTY. MULDOON'S REFERENCE IN SYDNEY FOUR WEEKS AGO TO PRESIDENT BEING "PEANUT FARMER FROM GEORGIA" IS CASE IN POINT. (SOME SOURCES ATTRIBUTED THIS REMARK AS MERELY OFFHAND COMMENT BY PRIMIN WHO MAY HAVE HAD ONE TOO MANY

SCOTCHES ON FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA.) APRIL 19 AUCKLAND
SPEECH, HOWEVER, WAS DELIBERATE AND CALCULATED.
IN THE FACE OF SIGNIFICANT CRITICISM BY OPPOSITION
OF HIS EARLIER REMARKS, PRIMIN SEEMS COMPELLED TO
HOLD ON TO, AND EVEN ELABORATE ON, PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT
OF PRESIDENT CARTER. IT IS STYLE TYPICAL OF MAN WHO
GIVES NO QUARTER IN THE FACE OF CRITICISM. WITH
SOME REASON, BASED ON THE SUCCESSFUL TYLE OF HIS
1975 ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, MULDOON BELIEVES THAT
COMPLETELY CANDID, OFTEN CRITICAL LEADERSHIP IS
APPRECIATED BY NEW ZEALAND VOTERS. TO THE
EXTENT AT LEAST THAT HE HAS BEEN AWARE OF THE DOMESTIC
BENEFITS, MULDOON IS THEREFORE GUILTY OF THE
VERY SIN HE SEES IN CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN
POLICY, I.E., CONDUCTING FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN A MANNER
MOST POPULAR DOMESTICALLY. THIS CAN BE EVEN FURTHER
PARTICULARIZED BY POINTING TO UP-COMING BY-ELECTION
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FOR FORMER PRIMIN SIR KEITH HOLYOAKE'S SEAT WHERE
OPPOSITION HAS BEEN HIGHLY CRITICAL OF MULDOON'S SYDNEY
CRACK ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER FOLLOWED BY HIS SUBSEQUENT
SILENCE ON THE SUBJECT.

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O R 210237Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1459

INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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SUVA FOR AMBASSADOR SELDEN

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5. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT MULDOON WAS UNMOVED BY A GENUINE CONCERN FOR THE TREND OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND THE PROBABILITY, IN HIS VIEW, THAT NEW ZEALAND'S INTERESTS ARE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE OVERLOOKED BY CARTER ADMINISTRATION. IT IS HARD TO SUGGEST WHAT MULDOON WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO SEE IN FIRST THREE MONTHS OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION. HE IS CERTAINLY MINDFUL THAT GIVEN THE SMALLNESS OF ITS POPULATION, ECONOMY AND MILITARY, NEW ZEALAND CAN NEVER BE COUNTED IN RANKS OF AMERICA'S MOST IMPORTANT ALLIES. YET NEW ZEALAND HAS FOR YEARS BEEN HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON UNITED STATES FOR STRATEGIC PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC
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COOPERATION. MULDOON HAS STRESSED THIS DEPENDENCE TO AN EVEN GREATER DEGREE THAN HAVE OTHER RECENT NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENTS. HE THUS VIEWS U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AS A VERY LEGITIMATE, INDEED, VITAL CONCERN OF NEW ZEALAND AND HE FULLY EXPECTED AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THESE VIEWS WITH THE PRESIDENT. THOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO DIRECT EVIDENCE IN ANY OF HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS, THE FACT THAT MULDOON HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO GET AN EARLY VISIT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER MAY SUPPORT HIS VIEW THAT NEW ZEALAND'S INTERESTS ARE BEING OVERLOOKED BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION.

6. SPECIFIC ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO HIS COMMENTS ON "TRI-LATERALISM" AND HIS VIEWS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY SO FARE HAS BEEN DIRECTED EAST AND WEST IN NORTHERN HEMISPHERE TO WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN WITH INADEQUATE ATTENTION PAID TO AFFAIRS OF AFRICA, SOUTH-EAST ASIA, INDIAN OCEAN, AND SOUTH PACIFIC. HIS DOUBT ABOUT EFFICACY OF A "MORAL FOREIGN POLICY" IS PROBABLY SIMILARLY GENUINE, BUT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY HE HAS DETECTED IN ITS OPERATION A PERMANENT AND UNRESOLVABLE FLAW. RATHER, EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS LIKELY THAT "MORAL FOREIGN POLICY" RINGS THE WRONG BELLS IN PRIMIN'S MIND, REMINDING HIM OF THE VIRTUOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS OF NEW ZEALAND'S FORMER LABOR GOVERNMENT. MULDOON,

THEREFORE, MAY HAVE CONJURED IN HIS MIND AN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON A SENSE OF MORAL SUPERIORITY REMINISCENT OF THE POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HE DEFEATED. SIGNIFICANTLY, IN BOTH THESE AREAS, MULDOON CLAIMS TO HAVE FOUND SIMILARLY SHARED CONCERNS ON THE PART OF THE LEADERSHIP IN THE SEVEN ASIAN, MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HE RECENTLY VISITED. (DEPUTY HEAD OF BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE AT MULDOON'S REMARKS IN THIS CONNECTION. HE SAID BRITISH FELT THEIR FOREIGN OFFICE
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DISCUSSIONS WITH MULDOON IN LONDON ABOUT CALLAGHAN'S CONSULTATIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ALLAYED MANY OF HIS CONCERNS IN THIS REGARD.)

7. EMBASSY HAS ALWAYS VIEWED MULDOON AS SHREWD, ALBEIT UNPOLISHED, POLITICIAN. WHILE HIS POLITICAL TRAINING IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY MODEL MAY GIVE HIM A RATHER DIFFERENT VIEW OF AMERICAN POLITICAL DYNAMICS, THE SIMPLISTIC VIEWS OF WHICH HE DELIVERED HIMSELF IN HIS SPEECH COME AS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE TO THE EMBASSY. WE DO NOT THINK FOR A MINUTE THAT THOSE COMMENTS REPRESENT THE DEPTH OF HIS COMPREHENSION. RATHER, THEY ARE AIMED AT WHAT HE SAW AS THE LEVEL OF HIS AUDIENCE'S UNDERSTANDING.

8. IN RESPONSE TO NUMEROUS PRESS QUERIES FOLLOWING MULDOON'S SPEECH, EMBASSY OFFERED THE FOLLOWING COMMENT, DECLINING TO MAKE FURTHER ELABORATION. QUOTE WE NOTE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS ABOUT PRESIDENT CARETER WERE BASICALLY SYMPATHETIC. INDEED, IN SUMMARIZING HIS SPEECH, THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT THE POLICIES OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD EVOLVE IN A MANNER THAT IS HELPFUL TO THE TASK OF PRESERVING THE FREE WORLD. WE FULLY RECOGNIZE THAT THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES IS A LEGITIMATE CONCERN OF OUR ALLIES. THIS IS ESSENTIALLY WHAT MR. MULDOON WAS SAYING IN HIS SPEECH. WHATEVER THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID, WE KNOW THAT HE SPEAKS AS A GOOD FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES. FURTHERMORE, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE NEW SENSE OF PURPOSE AND LEADERSHIP WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER IS DEVOTING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY WILL ULTIMATELY BENEFIT NEW ZEALAND AND OUR OTHER FREE WORLD ALLIES AS WELL UNQUOTE.

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9. EMBASSY SEES EVERY VIRTUE IN DOWNPLAYING THE
NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF MULDOON'S SPEECH. IF THE
OPPOSITION WILL PERMIT IT, WE ARE CONFIDENT THE
PRIMIN WOULD BE MORE THAN CONTENT TO HAVE THE PERSONAL
REFERENCES IN THE AUCKLAND SPEECH BE THE FINAL --
AND SOON TO BE FORGOTTEN -- WORDS ON THE MATTER.
WE EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT THE THEME OF CONSULTATIONS
WITH NEW ZEALAND AND CONSIDERATION FOR ITS SOUTH
PACIFIC INTERESTS WILL REMAIN A FEATURE OF THE
PRIME MINISTER'S PRONOUNCEMENTS, AT LEAST UNTIL SUCH
TIME AS HE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THESE SAME
CONCERNS WITH THE PRESIDENT. IT WOULD OF COURSE BE
VERY HELPFUL IN DAMPENING THIS WHOLE AFFAIR IF A
SPECIFIC VISIT DATE FOR THE PRIM MINISTER WITH
PRESIDENT CARETER COULD BE ANNOUNCED SOON.
KILLGORE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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